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OFFSHORE ISLAND SITUATION

General

Uneasy quiet has apparently prevailed all along the China coast. Only reported activity has been sporadic shelling by Communist artillery in Tachen area, continued Communist military construction on the mainland opposite the Matsu group, and continued Nationalist air strikes against targets near the Tachens. Taipei claims one of its planes sank a Communist "destroyer" of 1,500 tons north of Yushan. It is doubtful that any Communist destroyers were in the area; the Nationalists may have hit a gunboat. Press reports of a "mammoth" demonstration by 7th Fleet planes north of Formosa have been denied by a "7th Fleet spokesman."

Tachens

According to a CBS radio report this morning, removal of Tachens garrison will begin Thursday. This is presumably Far East Time, would mean late today Washington time.

General Chase, MAAG chief in Taipei, reports the following figures on evacuation requirements:

Essential to evacuate -- 9,857 short tons of materiel 11,968 personnel

Desirable to evacuate -- 932 short tons materiel and supply 14,454 personnel (mostly local civilians)

Totals -- 10,789 short tons materiel 26,422 personnel

General Chase says these figures are estimates based on most recent information.

Removal of essential materiel and personnel on planned crash basis is estimated to require minimum of two days, provided that 7th Fleet planes maintain control of the air in the Tachen area.

PACOM Review Completed

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Six artillery pieces of unknown caliber have been located on Ichiang, according to a MAAG report. These guns have been conducting small-scale firing against targets on Upper Tachen and Nationalist islets north of the Tachens.

Limited firing by Communist guns on Ichiang could be registration for later heavy firing to disrupt evacuation operations.

Matsu

Continued Communist military construction work on the peninsula northwest of the Matsu group is reported. Earlier reports that 10 Communist junks bombarded Kaoteng, northernmost island of the Matsu group, have been corrected. The junks approached Kaoteng but did not fire on Nationalist positions. The Communist ships approached the island and were then driven away by Nationalist fire.

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Current indications suggest Communists will postpone a Matsu invasion at least until further preparations have been made.

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